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MONTANA

VACATION GUIDE

2005-2006



VISITMT.COM

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IN MONTANA, OUR

WELCOME

IS AS BIG AS OUR SKY.

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COVER PHOTOS:

GATES OF THE MOUNTAINS
BY JOHN LAMBING

HISTORIC WAGON
BY JOHN REDDY

MOUNTAIN GOAT
BY RODNEY SCHLECHT

BACK COVER PHOTOS:

KAYAKING WHITEFISH LAKE
BY CHUCK HANEY

POWDER RIVER AND BADLANDS
BY JOHN LAMBING

HORSES AND TEEPEES
BY DUSAN SMETANA



Photo of Governor Brian Schweitzer and family

Welcome to Montana! From the rolling wheat fields to the majestic mountains and pristine waters, we're sure you will find just what you are looking for. Home to Yellowstone National Park, the Upper Missouri River Breaks, Glacier National Park, and the Lewis & Clark Trail, Montana offers world-class opportunities the whole family can enjoy. I join all 900,000 of Montana's residents in welcoming you. Enjoy your stay!

Governor Brian Schweitzer

visitmt.com

SIX DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, EACH WITH ITS OWN GUIDE.

Montana is a big state with dramatically different landscapes, from mountainous forests to

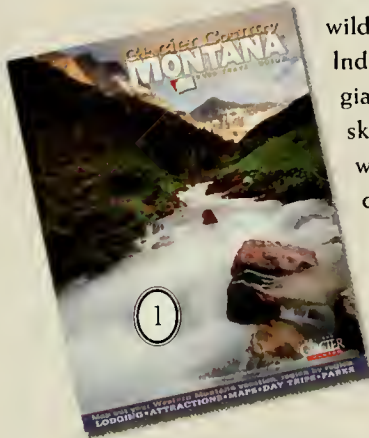
sweeping badlands. That's why the state is divided into six vacation regions (we call them "countries"), each with attractions and scenery that live up to its name. Best of all, each country produces its own Travel Guide, maintains its own web site and offers its own visitor resources. So, if you want more specific information about a particular region, or if you'd like to request a Travel Guide for any of Montana's six countries please contact any of them at the phone numbers or web sites listed.

visitmt.com

GLACIER COUNTRY

800-338-5072 • 406-837-6211
glacier.visitmt.com

Crowned by the awe-inspiring peaks of Glacier National Park (open year-round), Glacier Country is a trophy case of nature's best work. Experience Flathead Lake (the West's largest natural freshwater lake), the National Bison Range, wilderness areas, two Indian reservations, giant cedar forests, ski resorts, numerous world-class golf courses, missions and much more.



GOLD WEST COUNTRY

800-879-1159 • 406-846-1943
goldwest.visitmt.com

Treasures of gold brought miners to the area last century; today, natural treasures continue to bring visitors. See preserved gold rush towns from the 1860s such as Virginia City/Nevada City and Bannack, Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park, the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness, the Missouri River's "Gates of the Mountains," and historic cities such as Helena, Butte and Deer Lodge.

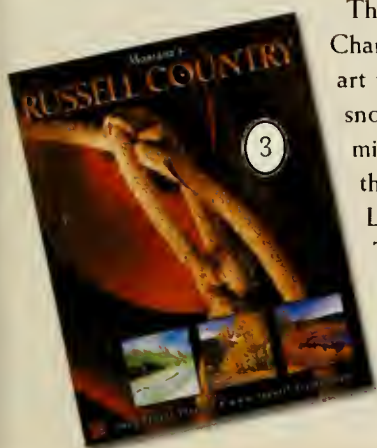


RUSSELL COUNTRY

800-527-5348 • 406-761-5036

russell.visitmt.com

The land named for cowboy artist Charles M. Russell is still a work of art today. Alongside scenes of snowcapped mountains and the mighty Missouri River, you'll find the C.M. Russell Museum, the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center, the nation's largest ancient buffalo jump, two Indian reservations, historic battlefields and more.



MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY

800-653-1319 • 406-653-1319

missouririver.visitmt.com

The giant Fort Peck Lake offers an amazing 1,500 miles of shoreline—as well as boating, fishing and camping. Four wildlife refuges encompass more than a million acres of wildlands for elk, deer, antelope, bighorn sheep and waterfowl. Culturally, there are numerous museums, as well as the Fort Union Trading Post and the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.



YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY

800-736-5276 • 406-556-8680

yellowstone.visitmt.com

Bordering Yellowstone National Park is a land filled with the wild and wonderful. Outdoors, you'll find

famous fly fishing rivers, wilderness areas, forests and three ski resorts: Big Sky, Bridger Bowl and Red Lodge Mountain. If you want to go inside, you can tour historic downtowns or visit Bozeman's Museum of the Rockies for its world-class dinosaur collection.



CUSTER COUNTRY

800-346-1876 • 406-778-3336

custer.visitmt.com

General Custer made his last stand here at Little Bighorn Battlefield. Lewis and Clark left the only remaining physical evidence of their journey at Pompeys Pillar (Clark's signature). There is much to explore here with the pictograph caves, historical museums and mansions, ZooMontana, Makoshika State Park, Bighorn Canyon and two Indian reservations.



- Scheduled Air Service
- Amtrak Route
- Interstate
- Indian Reservation
- U.S. Route
- State Route
- Other Route
- National Park

Map provided for general information only. For accurate and detailed information, pick up an Official Montana Highway Map at local chambers or visitor centers, or call 1-800-VISITMT (847-4868) or 406-841-2870.

Fast Facts about Montana

- Montana population: 909,453 (2002 U.S. Census estimate)
- Land area: 145,392 square miles
- Water area: 1,746 square miles
- Total area: 147,138 square miles

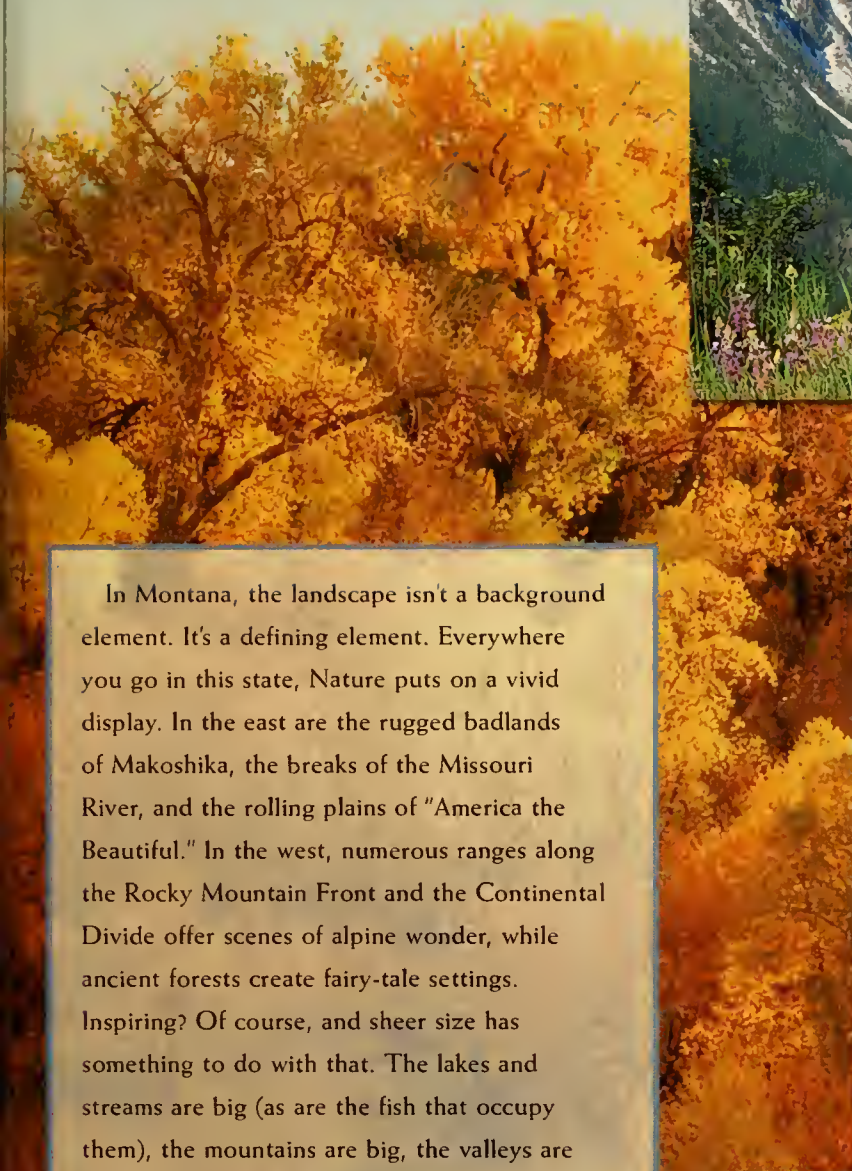


YOU'VE SEEN IT ON

POST
CARDS

NOW SEE IT IN PERSON.

TONGUE RIVER NEAR ASHLAND BY JOHN LAMBING



In Montana, the landscape isn't a background element. It's a defining element. Everywhere you go in this state, Nature puts on a vivid display. In the east are the rugged badlands of Makoshika, the breaks of the Missouri River, and the rolling plains of "America the Beautiful." In the west, numerous ranges along the Rocky Mountain Front and the Continental Divide offer scenes of alpine wonder, while ancient forests create fairy-tale settings. Inspiring? Of course, and sheer size has something to do with that. The lakes and streams are big (as are the fish that occupy them), the mountains are big, the valleys are big, even the sky is big—but then, you probably already knew that, if you've ever heard someone refer to Montana as "Big Sky Country." And while photos and post cards of Montana's rare beauty are indeed breathtaking, it's a beauty you can't fully experience with just your eyes: The scope and the scale of Montana's scenic wonders will refresh and rejuvenate all your senses. With so many places to see and spaces to roam, the natural wonders of Montana's land, water and sky don't just give you beauty. They give you perspective.



Photos. Trapper Peak, Bitterroot Mountains by Larry Javorsky, Beehive Basin, Spanish Peaks by Dean Sauskojus, Train along the Missouri River by John Lambing

WHERE THE

WAY IT
WAS

IS STILL THE WAY IT IS.

Montana's vast history doesn't just span a few centuries. Try a few millennia. Our landscapes were carved by ancient glaciers, and many of the state's valleys (Missoula Valley, for instance) were formed by giant glacial lakes. Montana was also a hot spot in the time of the dinosaurs: The state has been the site of numerous dinosaur fossil finds, including more than 400 *Maiasaura* eggs at Egg Mountain, made famous in the *Jurassic Park* movies. More recent histories include the stories of Montana's original people: The state is home to seven Indian reservations representing 11 tribes (find out more at indiannations.visitmt.com). Native ties to this land can be traced as far back as 15,000 years in cave pictographs around the state. And of course, tales of the frontier and the American West are part of this land, as well. The Lewis & Clark Expedition (now in the midst of its bicentennial commemoration) spent more time in Montana than in any other state. Miners and explorers led to the birth of boom towns such as Butte, Virginia City, Red Lodge, Helena and others. And famous battlefields are here, including many along the Nez Perce National Historic Trail, also known as the trail of Chief Joseph (www.fs.fed.us/npnht) and Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, site of "Custer's Last Stand" (www.nps.gov/libi). In short, Montana offers a vacation filled with historic moments.



Photos. St. Ignatius Mission National Historic Site, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument and Mountain Men by Donnie Sexton

SEE WHAT ALL THE SCENERY

UNSPLORES



MOUNTAIN MELODY BY DUSAN SMETANA

Montana has fueled the words of writers and poets such as John Steinbeck, A.B. Guthrie and others. Artists and photographers ranging from Charles M. Russell to Ansel Adams have captured images of the state's landscapes and people. Musicians as diverse as Hank Williams, Jr. and Philip Aaberg have composed odes to Montana. Every day, Big Sky Country is the inspiration for artistic and cultural endeavors. Montana's seven Indian reservations feature pow wows, encampments, traditional games, museums and cultural centers to help you learn about this area's original people. Around the state, dozens of local and regional museums interpret area history, including the Charles M. Russell Museum in Great Falls (home of the largest C.M. Russell collection in the world) and the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings (the largest art museum in the Northern Rockies). Montana's performing arts community includes professional theater troupes, city symphonies, ballet companies and other organizations bringing national and international acclaim. And year-round, festivals and events celebrate the creative spirit that continues to shape the Montana of today. Visit www.visitmt.com to find a year-round Montana calendar of events.



Photos: Quilting in the Country by Carol Polich, Pow Wow Dancer, Pioneer Town & Museum and Hornaday Buffalo—Museum of the Northern Great Plains by Donnie Sexton

HUNDREDS OF RESIDENTS PER

SQUARE MILE

ONLY SIX ARE PEOPLE.



Montana's four-legged, feathered and finned residents far outnumber the 250 types of birds, world-class wild trout populations and the country's not talking about a few animals in a zoo. Montana has animals in their natural Range in Moiese. The nation's largest migratory elk herd is in Montana, continental United States. Moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, deer, of acres of wildlands, the surrounding ecosystems of Glacier and Yellowstone a dozen national wildlife refuges, Montana offers the greatest biodiversity camera and pack your sense of wonder; chances are, wherever you go in



er human counterparts. Within Big Sky Country are more than
 st diverse collection of mammals: 100+ species. And we're
 ar natural habitat. Up to 500 buffalo roam the National Bison
 are the most grizzly bears and trumpeter swans in the
 vls, wolves, coyotes, foxes ... the list is long. With millions
 ne national parks, 14 federal wilderness areas and more than
 of any state in the lower 48. Pack your binoculars, pack your
 ontana, you're likely to meet a few of our wilder residents.



Photos: Black Bear Cub and Bighorn Lambs by Donald M. Jones



OVERLOAD YOUR SENSE OF

ADVENTURE

Adventure and Montana have gone hand-in-hand for... well, forever. With so much wilderness, forest and park land available, the state is filled with many ways to walk on the wild side. Start by fishing. Norman Maclean did, and his adventures inspired the classic book (and movie) *A River Runs Through It*. Montana has more than 1,400 square miles of lakes and streams available for chasing rainbows—and browns, and cutthroats and other trout. How about hiking and mountain biking? Since you can hike or bike in all national parks, national forests, recreation areas and state parks, you have several million acres of area to explore. That should fill up a week or two. Or, if you prefer, hoof it in a different way: on horseback. Montana offers numerous guides and opportunities for scenic rides of a couple hours, or a couple weeks.



Next up: golf. Montana has more than 70 public, semi-private and resort golf courses—including ones that have led *Golf Digest* to call the Flathead Valley one of the "50 Greatest Golf Destinations in the World." Enough said. Finally, why not try a bit of rapid transit via canoe, raft or kayak? For all kinds of other ideas, check out our online adventure files at visitmt.com/falcon or visitmt.com/virtualvisitor/biking/.



Photos: Whitewater Rafting by Donnie Sexton, Young Angler by Tim Egan, Canoeing Buddies by Denver Bryan, Biking Through Beargrass by Chuck Haney

200 YEARS AGO

LEWIS & CLARK

STAYED HERE. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

In 1804, Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark left St. Louis, Missouri, and began what would become known as "The Corps of Discovery." Formed by President Thomas Jefferson, the Lewis & Clark Expedition became the most famous exploration in American history. Nearly a quarter of the expedition's entire route and half of the recognized campsites are in Montana. Right now, the expedition is in the midst of its bicentennial commemoration, and once again, Montana is at the center of attention. Two of the National Lewis & Clark Bicentennial's fifteen "Signature Events" will happen in Montana: "Explore! The Big Sky" June 1- July 4, 2005 and "Clark on the Yellowstone" July 22-25, 2006. Until then, Montana has dozens of discovery points along the Lewis & Clark Trail (explore them online at lewisandclarkbicentennial.com), including Pompeys Pillar National Monument, with the last remaining physical evidence left by the expedition: William Clark's signature inscribed in sandstone. Lewis and Clark spent more time in Montana than in any other state on their journey. Maybe they were on to something.



WILD AND SCENIC PORTION OF THE
MISSOURI RIVER BY CHUCK HANEY

*Photos: Teepee and State of Montana Lewis & Clark Memorial, Fort Benton
by Donnie Sexton, Pompeys Pillar National Monument by Larry Mayer,
Beaverhead Rock State Park by Chuck Haney*



GO TO

GLACIER

PARK. GO TO THE SUN.

HANGING GARDENS BY CHUCK HANEY



There are many breathtaking sights on earth. It just so happens that Montana has more than its fair share. And many of Montana's most amazing sights are within the borders of Glacier National Park. Glacier is famous for its 1,000,000+ acres of pristine backcountry filled with pine forests, aquamarine lakes, dizzying mountain peaks, and yes, glaciers. With more than 700 miles of trails, it's been rated one of the premier hiking destinations in North America—and Glacier's amazing backcountry chalets are worth every step. Or, try horseback riding and winter cross-country skiing on those same trails. For alternate modes of transport, take a scenic boat cruise at Lake McDonald or St. Mary, or an interpretive bus tour. But perhaps Glacier's single biggest attraction is the aptly named Going-to-the-Sun Road, a 52-mile marvel of engineering that reaches the apex of the Continental Divide at Logan Pass. Recently restored red "jammer" buses, with their open tops, are the ideal way to take in the grandeur of Glacier. Together with Waterton Lakes National Park in Canada (its neighbor to the north, with which it shares a border), Glacier National Park became the world's first International Peace Park in 1932. In 1995, both parks were also designated as a "World Heritage Site," joining places such as the Taj Mahal and Egypt's pyramids.



Photos: Mountain Goat by Michael Javorka, Red Jammer Buses, Baring Creek and St. Mary Bridge by Chuck Haney

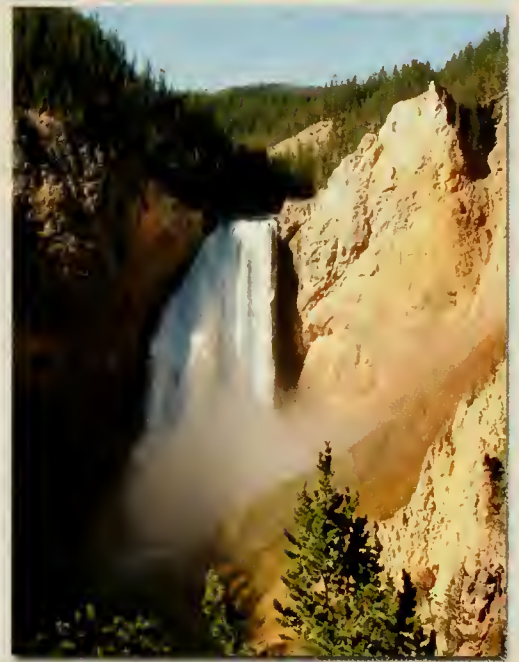
YELLOWSTONE

PARK. FIND OUT WHY IT WAS
THE WORLD'S FIRST.

It became the world's first national park on March 1, 1872. And in the hearts of countless visitors, it's still the first park. At the southern end of Montana, Yellowstone is the world's most famous national park. Part of that has to do with its unique landscape: It's home to roughly 10,000 geothermal features and more than 300 active geysers—including Old Faithful, which regularly erupts in a plume more than 130 feet tall. (Steamboat, the world's largest geyser, isn't far from Old Faithful.) Other oft-photographed features include Yellowstone Lake and its 110 miles of shoreline, as well as the Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River canyon. At 308 feet tall, it's an inspiring testament to the raw beauty and power of nature. With buffalo, elk, bears and other animals, Yellowstone is home to the largest concentration of free-roaming wildlife in the lower 48 states. Which is a perfect reason for you to do a little free roaming of your own. And Yellowstone has plenty of ways to roam: hiking, biking, horseback or stagecoach rides and winter snowcoach tours.



GARDINER, NORTH ENTRANCE TO YELLOWSTONE BY CAROL POLICH



Photos: Bison and Cowbird by Donald M. Jones, Lower Falls by Donnie Sexton, Mammoth Hot Springs by Paul Dix

A man wearing a white helmet, sunglasses, and a backpack is riding a mountain bike on a dirt trail. The background is a dense forest of tall evergreen trees under a blue sky with some clouds. The overall scene is vibrant and scenic.

WHY LIMIT YOURSELF TO ONE

MONTANA

VACATION?

A FEW DRIVES WORTH A LOOK.

Just about any Montana highway is a scenic drive. You don't have to visit a park or trek into a wilderness area to see some amazing sights. You just need a full tank of gas. Here are some suggestions:

- The Beartooth Highway connecting Red Lodge and Yellowstone Park. Here you'll cross the Beartooth Plateau, with altitudes nearing 13,000 feet.
- The Seeley-Swan Highway on MT 83 between Clearwater Junction and Bigfork. As you drive, you'll be surrounded by dense national forests and inviting mountain lakes.
- The Pintler Scenic Route on MT 1 between Drummond and Anaconda. Traverse a mountain pass with views of the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness.
- Kings Hill National Scenic Byway between White Sulphur Springs and Great Falls. Treat yourself to views of central Montana's Little Belt Mountains.
- Makoshika State Park bordering Glendive. A drive back in time through an 11,531-acre preserve of badlands and prairie complete with fossil remains.
- C.M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge on US 191 north of the Missouri River. A two-hour backcountry drive through eastern Montana's wildlife-rich prairie and badlands.

MOUNTAIN BIKING BY CHUCK HANEY



Exploring Montana online: Start your journey at visitmt.com. From there, you can find out information about lodging and attractions, see a calendar of events, send post cards to friends, sample Montana recipes and even make room reservations. Just click on any of the main category headings at visitmt.com, or use the "shortcuts" bar to jump to any section of the web site. Other Montana-related web sites of interest include:

indiannations.visitmt.com
Details on Montana's Indian reservations and culture

wintermt.com
Montana's winter site, covering fun during the snowy season

montanakids.com
Specifically designed for kids, including games and other fun

lewisandclarkbicentennial.com
Montana's Lewis and Clark site, devoted to the Corps of Discovery's journey across our state

wildlife.visitmt.com
A watchable wildlife site to some of Montana's other residents

nps.gov/glac/
Glacier National Park

nps.gov/yell/
Yellowstone National Park

mt.gov
State of Montana official home page

fwp.mt.gov
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

geology.cr.usgs.gov/states/MT.html
USGS Geologic Information of Montana

mt.water.usgs.gov/
USGS Water Resources of Montana

dnrc.state.mt.us
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

www.fs.fed.us/r1/
U.S.D.A. Forest Service Northern Region

www.mt.blm.gov
Bureau of Land Management

www.usbr.gov
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Our travel counselors love their jobs, and why shouldn't they? Every day they help hundreds of happy callers plan their visits to our great state. So give us a call at 800-VISITMT (847-4868) or 406-841-2870 and keep our travel counselors smiling.



Montana is the fourth-largest state in the union, so we have plenty of space for you to explore. And whether you want to wine and dine or drop out and disappear, there's a perfect itinerary waiting for you. Try some of the ideas mentioned in this guide, or go to www.visitmt.com for more inspiration.



Photos: Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site by Victor Bjornberg, Young Rodeo Clown by Rick & Susie Graetz, Missouri River near Fort Peck by Donnie Sexton



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